

Ten Years Hustling Without Feet.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF A FOOTLESS
MAN ON THE ROAD



ILLUSTRATED

Not a Tale of Woe

PRICE TEN CENTS

Ten Years of Hustling WITHOUT FEET

Being some
of the Experiences
of a Footless Man
on the Road.



Illustrated.

Introductory.

No apology for this pamphlet seems necessary. Its purpose is sufficiently evident to require no explanation.

Whether it possesses any merit or not is for the public to decide. No pretense is made of adding to the world's stock of popular literature. In a word, there is no higher motive involved than the expectation of putting a few shekels in the pocket of the writer, through the sale of the pamphlet, if the public deems him worthy of patronage and encouragement. If they do not, he expects, at least, to be treated with courtesy, which is every man's due, in whatever station of life he may be placed.

Respectfully,

GEO. A. HAZELETT.



PREFACE.

*"It is no benefit to have given me something,
but it is a benefit to have enabled me to obtain
something for myself."*—EMERSON.

It is not expected that the public will unani-
mously approve and encourage this humble effort.
It is impossible to please everybody, and no matter
how worthy a man may be or how good his inten-
tions, he will readily find some people who will
criticise his actions, pick flaws in his conduct, or
circulate evil reports of his character.

Most people recognize that a footless man has a
shade or two the worst of it in the struggle for
existence, and are disposed to favor him in any
worthy effort he may undertake.

There are those, however, who think he ought
to take even chances along with able-bodied peo-
ple, or else go to the poorhouse. My own opinion
is that anyone handicapped by the loss of any of
his members or faculties is justly entitled to any
compensating advantages which will tend to make
the struggle an equal one; and that he is entitled
to such advantages as a matter of justice rather
than charity. That if no way is provided for giv-
ing him the long end of the stick he is justified in
taking it himself. That the loss of his feet does not
deprive him of his right to go where he will or do
what he pleases so long as he keeps within the
bounds of law and decency.

The following pictures are submitted for the
benefit of the curious, and may attract by their
novelty or may be interesting as illustrating some
of the ways in which a footless man may make
a living. The other disabled people introduced be-
sides myself are friends of mine, some of whom I
have been associated with in various enterprises,
or whom I have met in my travels and become ac-
quainted with. I have said as little about them
as possible, for like myself, they prefer to tell their
own story if it must be told.

I am aware that my booklet will generally
be deemed of little account and its purchase con-
sidered a matter of charity pure and simple. I am
not worried about this for the reason that the
people have persistently maintained this attitude
toward everything I have tried to sell whether
possessed of value or not. I believe that if I was
selling gold dollars for 50 cents each, that most
people would give me the same old guff about hav-

ing no use for it but would buy one "to help me
out." The moment I begin to sell an article it
becomes useless and undesirable and is bought for
no earthly reason except to benefit me. So be it.
I will allow the good people their own way in this
matter, chiefly because I cannot help myself. I
will go even further and make a virtue of neces-
sity by encouraging their charitable impulses,
considering the motive which prompts them, and
the public is hereby warned not to offer me money
unless they expect me to take it.

No one need worry about the possibility of my
getting rich at this business. Just the moment I
get situated so I can make a living out of bees
and poultry I will drop this line of work with
alacrity and turn to the more congenial pursuits
above indicated.

The alleged poetry in the back of this pamphlet
must not be taken too seriously, but just seriously
enough. I have perhaps dwelt rather more than
necessary upon the unpleasant experiences and
disagreeable people and said too little about the
large proportion who treat me well. This is natu-
ral since "man nurses the recollection of wrong
and too often forgets the kindnesses bestowed."

The full length picture on page 15 is myself on
a pair of artificial limbs. Why I do not wear
them is explained in part first. I would be only
too glad to wear them if I could. Some day when
I have money to burn I will experiment with the
several hundred different makes of artificial limbs
each claiming to be the best and *guaranteed satis-
factory* and it is not impossible that I may at least
find a limb better than those I have. In the
meantime I have better uses for my money than
to help enrich some artificial leg maker with it.

Geo. A. HAZELETT.

Weston, Nebraska, August, 1899.

*Bear lightly on your brother man,
O'erlook his faults as best you can,
For as you live, and fate is grim,
You'll need this clemency from him.*

—ANONYMOUS.

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PART FIRST.

The Short Man's Account of Himself.

Almost every person, when he sees a man bereft of both his legs, feels a desire to know how he sustained his loss. A poet says, "a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," and one, in feeling thankful that he has escaped such a hard fate himself, sympathizes with one so afflicted.

I will not recite a long string of harrowing details, but state briefly the circumstances, which were as follows:

On the evening of March 15, 1889, my cousin and myself decided to go up to the Platte River hunting. Arriving at Wahoo, Nebraska, where we expected to take the train, we laid down in the depot waiting room and both fell asleep. Some time after dark we were awakened by the noise of a train, which proved to be ours, pulling out past the depot. Not realizing the danger of such a performance, we attempted to get aboard and in doing so I slipped, and falling under the wheels had both legs run over just above the ankles. Unfortunately, we had neglected to provide ourselves with tickets beforehand, so I had nothing to show that I had any business getting on, and hence had no valid case against the railway company for damages. I had the matter looked up by competent lawyers and was informed that it was no use to bring action. I must do the company justice, however, to say that they treated me courteously and considerately and favored me more or less afterward in the way of transportation, although under no particular obligation to do so.

A few days after the accident, my limbs were amputated just below the knee, the operation being performed by Dr. Pelton, of Wahoo (now dead), assisted by Dr. Morton of Wahoo (now dead) and Dr. G. Smith of Weston, the latter now practicing at Shenandoah, Iowa.

The operation was quite successful, my limbs healed rapidly and I was able to be up and crawl about in the short space of six weeks. Later on I had a pair of wooden peg legs made and in a short time was able to handle myself quite well upon them with the aid of a cane and a crutch.

What I would do for a living, or what I could do, rather, and how I was going to set about it

when decided on, was a serious puzzle to me about this time.

However, I did not then realize the difficulties I would have to contend with nor did I, until some time later, when I had begun to "hustle," and learned by bitter and painful experience what I was actually up against. At the time of which I speak, my prospects seemed comparatively bright to me, I was alive, my strength and energy was returning with my appetite, and I was in the hands of friends whom I knew would supply me with the necessities of life until I could find some way to provide for myself. I was persuaded that artificial limbs could be obtained, with which I could walk about as well as I did before. Meantime the peg legs were better than none, and so I was by no means overwhelmed or despondent on account of my misfortune. Some months later a general agent for a publishing house came along and offered me an opportunity, which I eagerly embraced, and thus began my career as a footless hustler. It may not be amiss to explain here that since the age of fifteen I had been my own boss and made my own way in the world by working on a farm at from \$8.00 to \$15.00 a month. It cost me \$400 to have my legs amputated. I had about \$100 in wages coming to me at the time and a relative of mine stood good for the balance until I could repay him. Thus, at the age of 19, I found myself minus feet, \$300 in the hole and dependent entirely upon my own resources. The "resources" consisted simply of a determination to make the best of it, supplemented by more *advice* from well-meaning friends than I could well make use of. What I needed more than anything else was *money* to pay my doctor bills, feed and clothe myself, buy artificial limbs, and support myself while learning some trade. So, as previously stated, I jumped at the first chance I had to make a dollar, and July (four months after my accident), finds me mounted upon the unsightly looking peg legs, with cane and crutch, sweltering in the heat of midsummer, energetically trying to make an honest dollar by taking orders for subscription books. Although the difficulties were

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many, I stuck to it determinedly and achieved success—very moderate success, 'tis true, and won through great exertion—yet the satisfaction derived was great in proportion, since it removed the utter sense of helplessness and dependence that at first tended to make life gloomy. A latent self-reliance and spirit of independence was developed and the hard prospect which at first presented itself, of being a helpless charge dependent upon friends and relatives for support, faded away.

The first week of my book canvassing I had a little experience which, having some bearing on my present method of doing business, may be

sidered me an object of charity. Had I accepted her donation, it would have been receiving alms, as becoming a beggar, which is a disgrace.

This is a typical instance. Hundreds of times since, in the course of my hustling, have I encountered similar experiences. Like most mortals I was normally endowed with a certain amount of independence and self-respect, and the loss of my limbs in no way changed my mental apparatus so as to remove these natural qualities. I was accordingly not prepared to sell them for twenty-five cents. It was too cheap. Had a thousand or two been offered I might have considered the proposal. So I thought at the time. Eventually



THREE OF A KIND — BEATS TWO PAIR

worth relating. A lady declined to subscribe for my book, but proposed to donate me twenty-five cents, with which to purchase my dinner. I promptly refused the quarter as gracefully as I could. She insisted on my taking it. When I positively and absolutely declined, with thanks, stating my reasons, she seemed considerably offended and acted as though she felt like telling me to "go to thunder," or words to that effect. Now, I most assuredly appreciated this lady's good intentions, but rather resented her method of expressing them, since it implied that she con-

I learned when a man has lost his feet that he is supposed by many to have lost also these qualities of independence and self-respect and ought to submit to be made a beggar without protest. As persons with such notions of fitness can never be made to see their action from any but their own point of view, and are always more or less offended when not allowed to have their own way about it, I have lately adopted the plan of accepting such donations as the easiest way out of it, and go on my way rejoicing in the consciousness that I am "sold again for ten cents."

I continued canvassing during the summer and fall of 1889 and succeeded in securing quite a large number of subscriptions for delivery in December. Having no capital to begin with, I was obliged to borrow enough to pay for my first order of books, amounting to about \$100. This sum the banker in our town, Mr. Clark, kindly loaned me. I was able to return it promptly after my books were delivered. After paying expenses, I found I had netted pretty fair wages for my work. The problem of locomotion, however, was yet to be solved. The peg legs were far from handsome or convenient and when ice and snow came, were not safe. Artificial limbs were a bright dream of

boots for my knees, similar to his. This mode of locomotion improved from time to time, turned out to be the only practical one if much walking was to be done. Some years afterwards I was induced to invest a good round sum in a pair of artificial limbs, with the hope of bettering my condition. They proved a delusion and a snare, as they do, I believe, in a great many, if not the majority of cases.

In the spring of 1890, a year after my accident, my friend Williams (I had almost said brother, as he has always seemed like a brother to me), having had some experience in selling novelties, etc., on the streets and running a knife board at



ON WHEELS

the future, but not to be thought of until doctor bills, etc., were paid.

At this juncture I was fortunate to meet my "double," Mr. Williams, who had wrestled with a four days' blizzard in South Dakota, which had left him minus feet—almost exactly as the railway train had left me. Being a practical man, he had wisely come to the conclusion that height was no object to a footless man if obtained at the expense of comfort and convenience, so he simply made use of what limbs fate had left him, walking on his knees. He handled himself so well, compared with my clumsy arrangement of a walking lumber yard, that before we separated I had decided to follow my friend's example. In a short time I had abandoned the old peg legs and was equipped with

the fairs, etc., took me into partnership and we began a tour of Nebraska and adjoining states as "Street Fakirs." This is rightly considered a somewhat questionable calling, as commonly conducted. However, our methods were far different from the ordinary, and our rule was not to allow anything like "faking," as the term is usually understood, to characterize our business. Although we adopted the form, we avoided the principles, or lack of principles, of the craft. The knife board was our main reliance on this trip. For the benefit of the uninitiated, I will describe the outfit. It consisted of a board or table about four feet square in which was stuck an assortment of pocket knives at a distance of four inches apart each way, covering the entire surface of the board

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(see cut, page 8). The players stood at a distance of about five or six feet away and pitched $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch wooden rings at the knives, and were entitled to claim each and every knife which they threw a ring over, paying us for the privilege of throwing the rings at the rate of about seven for a dime. Many a farmer's heart was made glad by capturing a fifty-cent jack-knife with a dime's worth of rings, not to mention other less skilled or more unfortunate, who, after throwing forty or fifty cents' worth, went away without a knife.

In addition to the knife layout, we carried a supply of song books and a little work entitled "Conklin's Handy Manual of Useful Information." These books were sold around the town, in the stores and on the street, wherever a purchaser

and enjoyed the gratification of making our own living.

We made a tour of Nebraska and then tried Southwestern Iowa. At Hamburg we had occasion to spend Sunday and went out for a boat ride on the river. Coming back, the best landing place was inside a hog lot. My partner and the others were ahead and were outside of the lot while I was leisurely making my way toward the gate, when all of a sudden an old sow woke up from a sound sleep and spied me. Doubtless thinking I was some strange animal bent on devouring her pigs, she made for me viciously—"booh, booh, booh"—bristles raised, mouth open and her wicked eyes flashing fire. Luckily, I was near the fence, and with a yell I made a spring



THE BOOK CANVASSER

could be found. We were usually required to pay a license of from one to two dollars per day for doing business, although occasionally by going to considerable trouble we were able to secure a permit from the authorities to work without a license.

Let no one imagine that this sort of work was any picnic. It was a case of "hustle" from morn till night, and sometimes far into the night, as on special days when something unusual was going on. We were "out for the stuff," and we put in our best licks. What would have been easy for able bodied men was often laborious work for us. Times were prosperous those days and the "rake-off" was good. We did not mind the work or the pain of blistered knees so long as the remuneration was satisfactory. And so we pegged away

for it, and went over that seven rail fence quicker'n scat. I don't know to this day how I did it. But I remember the look of baffled rage which the sow flashed through the fence at me and the uproarious laughter of the rest of the crowd, who had witnessed the circus.

Iowa seemed rather a poor state for our work and we soon returned to Nebraska. The latter part of July finds us at Gordon with designs on the Black Hills country. At this time (1890) railroad facilities in the Black Hills were limited, while stage traveling was necessarily very expensive. We were equal to the emergency, however, and proceeded to fit up a rig consisting of a covered spring wagon and a team of Indian ponies. With this outfit we drove all through the Black Hills country and thence down through Eastern Wyo-

ming, arriving at Cheyenne in October. We did pretty well in the Hills, as money was plenty and pocket knives and literature scarce, and traveling in the manner we did our expenses were comparatively light. We camped out most of the time and prepared our own meals and so were independent of both railways and hotels. I had a violin with me with which I used to beguile the tedious hours when making the long, lonesome drives from one town to another. One day on the stretch from Hill City to Deadwood I had the fiddle out and was sawing away for dear life while my partner did the driving. The trail was awful in places, and usually a creek crossing was an

nothing to do but wait till reinforcements came along in the shape of another team, when we were pulled out, and patching things up, continued on to Deadwood. We were somewhat at a disadvantage in some respects when it came to handling a team, but we always managed *somehow*. For instance, one pony was a high-headed rascal, and it always took us both to bridle him—one to steer him up alongside the wagon while the other stood on the tongue or the wheel and put the bridle on. The collars we always put on upside down in order to buckle them, and then turned them around after being buckled. By standing on our "tip toes" and reaching up with one hand, we



THE FOOTLESS "FAKIRS"

almost impassable mud hole. But, when I got interested in the fiddle, I paid no attention to mud holes or anything else. So when we came to a particularly bad one, I kept right on sawing as usual, while the ponies strained their traces and the rig sank down in the mud. Suddenly, snap! went the double trees and the wagon promptly stopped, while the ponies went on, nearly pulling my partner out over the dashboard as he hung onto the lines, while "Old Zip Coon" was suddenly cut off in the middle and my fiddle bow hung suspended in the air. I had fiddled the outfit into a mud hole, but could not fiddle it out. There was



THERE ARE OTHERS

could check or uncheck the animals. The natives used to gather round sometimes and watch us hitch up or unhitch and seemed to think it a sight worth seeing, and I presume it was, but we never considered it worth while to pass the hat.

One day after leaving the hills, on our way to Cheyenne, we "stopped for refreshments" at noon in the high and dry prairie country of Eastern Wyoming. It usually fell to my lot to attend to the culinary department, while my partner did the hostler act. I was about to prepare some coffee, when to my dismay I discovered that not a solitary fragment of fuel was available except a small

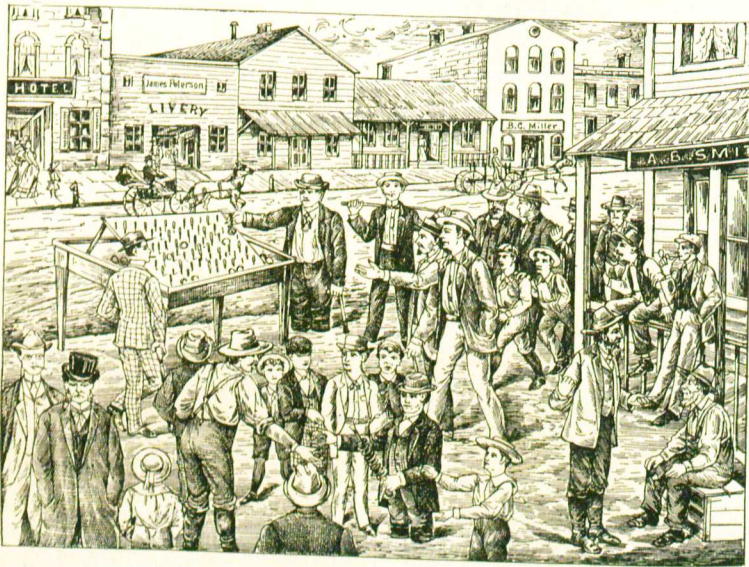
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splinter of pine which happened to be in the wagon box. Not even a dry stick of sage brush could be found. Here was a dilemma—plenty of grub, but no fuel to cook it with. One can't boil coffee and fry bacon without fire. Calling my partner's attention to the difficulty, he merely smiled knowingly and proceeded to gather up a handful of "Buffalo Chips," with which the plains were plentifully strewn, and whittling a few shavings off the pine stick, soon had an elegant fire going which was quite sufficient for all our needs. He had been an old plainsman and cowboy previous to losing his limbs and, as this instance indicates, was quite at home in the "wild woolly West."

Another time water was the thing needful. We had driven all day without finding any water,

and wagon. Loading our stuff into the ranchman's rig, we were able to haul our own, thus lightened, to his house five miles distant. We partook of the ranchman's hospitality that night and, after a hearty supper of antelope steak and a good night's rest, we were prepared to face the music again the next day. With a hickory sapling and a liberal amount of fence wire we repaired the damaged wheel sufficiently to bear up the empty wagon; and, engaging the ranchman to haul our load for us, we drove to the town of Lusk the next day, where we were able to get our wagon substantially repaired, and, incidentally, lightened our load considerably by disposing of quite a quantity of our stock in the town.

A few days later we were driving past one of



THE KNIFE BOARD IN ACTION.

either for ourselves or for our ponies, and toward nightfall came to a creek, which proved to be dry. We thought to drive along the bed of it some distance in the hope of finding a spring or pool somewhere; but in getting down a slight embankment into the creek bed our wagon gave an extra lurch and, being pretty heavily loaded, one of the wheels gave way, and there we were, stuck for good, with no water, ranch, or human habitation within forty miles, for aught we knew. Some thing must be done, however, and so my partner, leaving me to guard the outfit, bestrode one of the ponies and struck out to find a ranch. As we had not seen a house all day, I fully expected him to be gone twelve to twenty-four hours at least; but, as luck would have it, in a couple of hours he returned, accompanied by a ranchman with a team

those high, pillar-like formations, peculiar to the country, which rise abruptly from the level plain and tower sometimes hundreds of feet in the air. A rabbit hopped along through the sage brush toward the base of the pillar and my partner took a shot or two at him with his pistol but missed, and we drove on. We had scarcely more than started when we heard the most prodigious crash, clatter and roar I ever heard, and glancing around, saw that about one-third of the butte, or pillar, had toppled over and fell down—doubtless jarred loose by the discharge of the pistol. Thousands of tons of rock and debris came tumbling down pell mell with such a mighty jar and noise it made the earth shake while a dense cloud of dust arose from it like smoke from a burning building. I suppose the rabbit was underneath

and is doubtless there yet. We were far enough from it ourselves to be in no danger, but it was a never-to-be-forgotten sight.

We put in about six weeks on this trip and I don't believe I ever enjoyed myself better in my life. Snow was flying when we finally pulled into Cheyenne, our objective point. Here we separated, as it was growing too late in the season for street work such as we had been engaged in. My partner drove down to Denver, where he finally disposed of the team and went to Texas for the winter. I went to Ogden, Utah, and after some skirmishing around, selling books, etc.,

make a tour of the Pacific coast. I sold out my business in due time and prepared for another pilgrimage.

Before we left Ogden, the citizens of the place were treated to a rather unusual sight in the way of "abbreviated humanity." A young man with both feet off had been residing there for some time before I arrived and with whom I soon became acquainted, of course. My ex-partner's arrival swelled the number of footless men in town to three, and a day or two afterwards another had drifted in, minus both legs below the knees. Four footless men in a gang were indeed a novelty,



THE CURBSTONE MERCHANT

bought out a popcorn stand and went into business. Although my premises were humble and unpretentious (see cut, page 9), I did a thriving business through the winter and was as proud of my "store" as many a merchant would be of a six-story establishment.

I continued a pop corn merchant during the fall and winter and the next summer branched out a little and added fruit to my stock in trade. Toward fall, however, the town became very dull in all lines and my business decreased until there was barely bread and butter in it, and no "pie" at all.

About this time my former partner drifted into town by appointment, and we struck up a deal to



THE TWO SHORTIES

One is a sensation wherever he goes, but four—is almost a regiment.

We were the talk of the town, but little attention did we pay to it, for, like birds of a feather, we flocked together, and proceeded to enjoy the society of our kind to the fullest extent for a few days. One rather amusing incident may be worth relating. We had taken a street car to go out to the Hot Springs, near Ogden, and happened to all take seats on one side of the car together, with our four pairs of stumps sticking out in a row. A fellow sitting opposite eyed us curiously for a few minutes and then waggishly remarked, "Well, boys, that's a pretty hard row of stumps." Unfor-

tunately, I failed to secure a picture of this crippled quartette, so cannot refer the reader to it.

In due time we separated, my partner and myself heading westward and arriving finally in San Francisco, where we met some old acquaintances and formed some new ones among the crippled fraternity. One group, taken in San Francisco, forms the illustration on page 11, and another taken in Los Angeles, will be found on page 4, entitled "Three of a Kind." This picture was taken under rather peculiar circumstances. Three of us were walking along Spring street together when we passed a photograph gallery. The proprietor of the gallery espied us and seemed to be struck at once by a bright idea. "Come inside, boys," he said, "I want to make a negative of you—it won't cost you anything, and I will give you each a couple of pictures when finished."

came out, behold it contained a two-column write-up, with pictures of us, etc. As it happened, the writer of this article had sense enough to put it in such a way that it would benefit us, and not in a slurring, belittling style, as is usually done when the press deigns to notice us. We used to hear of that "Examiner" write-up all over the coast, wherever we went. Another time in San Francisco we all concluded to go to the theatre in a body. At the corner of California and Montgomery streets, where we had stopped to take a car, we were surrounded in a few minutes by a crowd of good-naturedly curious people, some of whom engaged us in conversation. Others stopped to listen, out of curiosity, while still others, noticing a group collected on the walk, stopped to see what was going on, and they kept coming and coming until we were completely



THE KINETOSCOPE OUTFIT. Taken in the Park at Ottawa, Kansas.

So in we went and had them taken. I have thought it preferable generally not to mention names, as cripples as a rule are a sensitive lot; and, besides, the public have a provoking habit of mistaking one footless man for another whenever they appear separately, and names would only add to the confusion.

California proved a good state for our business. There are many pleasant people in the state and we were well treated and liberally patronized. Some half dozen of us, legless, armless, etc., had lodgings over the "Examiner" press rooms, on Montgomery street, while in San Francisco. Being so numerous, we naturally attracted considerable attention, and the newspaper people soon spotted us and sent a reporter up to interview us one evening. When the next issue of the "Examiner"

hemmed in and had difficulty in making our way through the mass of people to the car when it came along. This was not a particularly pleasant experience with us, but we considered it excusable in a San Francisco crowd and took it simply as another indication that California people never did things by halves. Arriving at the theatre, we were conducted straightway to some of the best seats in the house, regardless of what our tickets called for. Thus we were met everywhere by evidences of good will on the part of the people, and so put in the winter quite pleasantly in California. My partner and myself came east again in the spring to Ogden, where we separated for a time.

I worked down through Colorado to Denver and Pueblo and on eastward through Kansas, on the Santa Fe.

I had by this time squared up all my debts and had a small surplus ahead. September finds me in Kansas City with the purpose of investing in the long-coveted artificial limbs. From what I had seen of others attempts to wear them, my hopes of benefit in this direction had somewhat abated and I was prepared to be disappointed in them. However, I was anxious to try a pair and get some practical experience of my own, so I put up my hard-earned money and had them made. The result was even worse than I had anticipated and after a prolonged and unsuccessful attempt to wear them with any degree of satisfaction, finally cast them aside as a useless relic and credited myself with \$150 worth of experience.

I found, among other things, that they did not enable me to do anything I could not do just as

Meeting a footless friend in Omaha whom I had met before in California, we formed a commercial alliance (not a trust) and made preparations for a summer campaign. This was in the spring of '93. We got up a stationery package with a picture of the pair of us on the outside, and christened it the "Two Shorties Stationery Package." Cutlery and jewelry were also a part of our stock in trade. This we disposed of on a "layout" with tickets and numbers. Gambling? Perhaps it is, but so is a church lottery or grab-bag, prize package, cigar wheel, slot machine, etc. Some even say that life itself is a lottery, and the venerable institution of marriage a game of chance. Suffice it to say that most of the people considered it all right, and patronized it accordingly. One of us would run the "layout" and the other sell



SOMEWHAT ABBREVIATED

well or better without them; that about all one gained by wearing limbs was the better appearance he was able to present and that he gained this at the expense of bodily comfort and convenience. Many a time, after a day of torture and misery on them, have I been tempted to take an ax and chop them up into kindling wood. And since abandoning them, I am often seized with the desire to use an ax on some people who try to tell me what a grand good thing artificial limbs are and what a chump I am for not wearing them.

They were absolutely no benefit to me whatever and all the calculations I had made on the prospect of wearing them were nil. Thus the artificial limb venture proving a failure and having no visible means of support, I fell back upon my old graft, i. e., street work.

stationery, taking turn about. We worked like beavers and did pretty well for a month or so, until we reached Sioux City, Iowa. This place proved a "Jonah" for us. We were out of stationery when we arrived, but had a big lot ordered there. It was delayed for over two weeks, and as we could not get either permit nor license to run the "layout," we had to remain in enforced idleness until, our funds running low, we separated, my partner remaining to receive the delayed goods when they arrived, while I took the "layout" and went up into Dakota to try to "raise the wind" in the meantime. The goods finally did arrive, but I continued to work alone that summer with knives and stationery, arriving finally in the vicinity of Chicago, in October, in time to be "in at the finish" of the great World's Fair.

The next year, being tired of knocking around the country, and having accumulated a little money, I invested my pile in a business venture with a relative of mine in my home town of Weston, Nebraska. But fortune seemed against me, and the drought and hard times coming on together, the business met with disaster in a short time and fell to pieces. I bought a tricycle (see illustration page 5), and a stock of novelties with what I had saved from the wreck, and started south in the fall to put in the winter at my old trade.

Those who have been in the south in mid-winter know, of course, what it is like, but for the benefit of those who have not had the experience, I will here quote a bit from my diary:

the lock at various times, and the holes were left for the wind to whistle through. To get to the dining room you passed out the back door, walked the length of the building via a long porch or veranda, bounded on one side by the outer wall of the hotel proper and on the other by the chilly atmosphere. Arriving at the terminus of this you mounted a flight of rickety steps, waded through a snow drift, turned a corner and entered the dining room. Of course this process was simply reversed to get back. For a wonder, the washroom was inside the house instead of outside, as is usual in Southern hotels. I cannot now recall all the various windings, twists and turns, ups and downs, which I was obliged to go through to get to bed, but I distinctly re-



A STREET SCENE

"If I had not known before that I was in the South, I could have told it at once by the aspect of the hotel, everything dilapidated, dingy, squalid, cheerless. Any old thing seemed to answer the purpose it was originally intended for so long as it hung together. The office, of course, was cold, except a space included within an imaginary circle drawn around the stove at a distance from it of ten feet at the most when the stove was red hot, and shrinking to nothing as the fire got low. One would have to move with the heat or take the alternative of freezing or roasting, or both, according as the stove warmed or cooled. There were great cracks both above and below the door and on both sides, as well as sundry liberal-sized key-holes which had become superfluous by changing the position of

member it was mostly outside the house and the air on entering my room seemed even colder than that outdoors. I hastily undressed and got into bed, first piling all my coats on for extra cover as well as some old newspapers which I found in the bureau drawer, having read somewhere that they were pretty good for coverlets in a pinch, and "a pinch," thinks I, this seems to be. So I piled on the newspapers, but they kept such a rattling all night every time I moved that I could not have slept if I had been warm, which I was far from being.

I was to take an early train, and was called at 6:00. Whew! but it was a trial to crawl out and dress in the cold and I nearly shook to pieces. But, after a good breakfast, I felt O. K."

Some have a mistaken idea that if one goes

South in the winter he escapes the cold weather. My experience has been, "Go South and freeze to death."

I made a little money in the South, though the rain and mud, snow and slush, poor hotels and everything else that was disagreeable to contend with, I earned about three dollars for every one I got. Toward spring I met a fellow in Sherman, Texas, running a kinetoscope. He offered me a percentage of the receipts to "spiel" (shout) for him. I went with him for a week and found he wanted to sell out. I closed a deal with him and went broke to make a first payment on the machine, trusting to my luck to make the rest out of the business, and thus I became a kinetoscope exhibitor. As many people never saw a kinetoscope and do not know what it is, I will explain, for their information, that it was the first adaptation of the moving picture exhibition that is now projected upon a screen, in view of an audience in a hall or opera house, and variously termed "vitascope," "biograph," etc. My outfit (see cut, p. 10) consisted of a small cabinet with a lens in the top through which the person viewing the scene looked. An electric motor run by a battery furnished the motive power for running the film through which contained the pictures. A miniature electric light, also obtained from the battery, illuminated the interior of the cabinet so the view could be distinctly seen. The pictures were more perfect than in the present method of reproducing them, but were small and the view did not last so long.

My troubles had now begun in earnest. Four hundred dollars was the price of the outfit, but it was a money-maker, and I supposed it would continue to do so until I could make a little out of it for myself. I paid for the machine that summer and bought another for \$150. Then the kinetoscope company, who had a monopoly of the business, put the price of machines down and the price of accessories up. Machines could be bought for \$100, and they became as common as phonographs in no time. Films, batteries, lamps, were destructible and must be replaced occasionally, and they cost nearly their weight in gold. For a year and a half I wrestled with these machines, trying to make some money with them, and did make money, but it all went to the kinetoscope company for accessories and supplies, or to the express company for transportation of the outfit, or to electric light plants for charging batteries, etc., to say nothing of the ever-ready hotel man, who must, of course, have his share. The second year my old partner joined me in the business, and we got things in ship shape and started in with high hopes. But luck was against us from the start, and we soon found the business

was played out, and we could not make it pay. My partner got enough of it in a couple months and I started out alone again to make a final effort, or sell the machines, if possible. I finally got a chance to rent them to another exhibitor, which I gladly did. He had a large outfit and could work to better advantage, it seemed. Terms were arranged and the machines turned over to him at Rock Island, Illinois. That is the last I ever saw of him or of the machines. I had gotten them off my hands at last, but might as well have dumped them in the river. I instituted a search for the rogue when I found he had absconded, but to no purpose. I traced the outfit to Chicago, but there lost the clue, and being uncertain whether I was not better off without the machines than with them, I finally gave up the search. Once more I fell back on my old occupation, as being the only thing left for me to do. I bought a little stock of novelties, and started East, intending to try my fortune in that country, as I had never been East since I was a child. This was in the fall of '96, the great presidential campaign year. I did a thriving business for awhile in campaign buttons and badges. And put in a year in the East, principally in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Maryland and West Virginia.

I found that, as a rule, Eastern people seemed to have little respect for a footless man and often treated him rather shabbily. To them I was an object of charity—nothing more. His whole duty toward me was discharged by the bestowal of a few cents' worth of patronage. The idea of according to me any of the common rights, privileges or courtesies extended to able-bodied people, or manifesting a fellow-feeling or friendly interest in my welfare was to them evidently absurd. It may be that a sober, respectable Footless Hustler is a *rara avis* in the East and that their idea of the treatment due me is derived from long experience with the species of professional beggar and chronic mendicant which infests the East; or, as I am inclined to think, it results from a general misapprehension of the "Charity" idea. For how could an object of charity be respectable or entitled to any consideration outside of a few cents' worth of "Charity?" At any rate, my purpose in the East was not to remodel their institutions or beliefs, but to honorably accumulate a little lucre if I could, and to that end I continued to direct my attention and energies.

From Northern New York I crossed over into Canada. Now, thought I, if these people here are anything like certain narrow minded specimens in my own country, they will have good opportunity to remind me that I am off my reservation and had better cross over and seek patronage in my own country, instead of bothering them.

But the good Canadians were not of that stripe. Although they knew I was from the States, not once during my six weeks' sojourn in Canada did anyone insinuate that I was out of my proper latitude. Whatever they may have thought about it, they invariably treated me with kindness and consideration and patronized me liberally.

Returning home from a fairly successful trip in the East, I again embarked upon the sea of fortune in a little business enterprise, which, according to precedent, was duly wrecked and sunk to the bottom in the short space of six months.

Evidently I have little business ability, or have been extremely unfortunate at times in choosing a partner. But, having taken the precaution to provide myself with a life-preserver on the last business voyage, I kept afloat, and with the salv-

to inflict upon a long-suffering public any more of his personal experiences.

CONCLUSION.

Several years having elapsed since the foregoing was written, it may be well to bring it down to date. Lack of space forbids any detailed account of my recent hustling with the pamphlet, which I have handled exclusively since getting it up. I have kept the main object (as stated above) steadily in view, and have my location selected and partly paid for. If the present season's work pans out well the year following will find me in Colorado, hustling in a new line—chicken-ranch and apiary. Have decided to compromise on twenty acres and a broncho. Have taken a part-



age of the wreck was able to install my widowed mother in a little home in my native town, where, raising poultry, etc., and keeping a boarder or two, she is enabled, with a little assistance from me, to keep the wolf from the door. Thus we maintain that most precious of all blessings, a home.

To conclude, I may add that my ambition now is to acquire "forty acres and a mule" and settle down in some favorable locality to the congenial pursuit of poultry raising and bee culture. I am already becoming something of a "chicken crank" and am rapidly acquiring the "bee fever," and expect sooner or later to devote my entire time to this business and make it my permanent occupation.

If the proceeds of this pamphlet enable me in due time to accomplish that object, it will have served its main purpose, and the writer will be content to sink into oblivion, and will agree not

ner in the business, and this time flatter myself that I have chosen well and wisely. Our contract is for life. Those who may question the wisdom of such a plan are referred to the picture on this page. With such a partner my success is assured. It will be a great satisfaction and relief to me when I am enabled to quit the road with its ups and downs, hard work and disagreeable experiences, and devote my time and energies to making a living in a more congenial way, and aided by my "partner," make a home for ourselves in the great West. I desire to express to the public my appreciation of their patronage and encouragement which I have always tried to be worthy of and without which, handicapped as I have been, I could not have accomplished much. Thanking you one and all, I am,

Cordially yours,

"THE HUSTLER."

Ordway, Colorado, January, 1905.

ORIGINAL RHYMES

By GEO. A. HAZELETT

Perpetrated Under Pressure During Periods of Provocation
and Published with the View of Getting Even.



Yours truly,
GEO. A. HAZELETT.

To My Friends, and Others:

In presenting this modest and unpretentious collection of verses, I make no claim for them other than that of originality. I am not egotistic enough to imagine myself possessed of poetic ability—just a mere rhymester.

They may amuse, possibly instruct. At any rate, they are harmless.

They show in a way "how vast is the gap between brotherhood and benevolence—as vast as the abyss between sympathy, which all men crave, and pity, which every proper man resents."

OCCUPATION.

I'm a "hustler" that is all,
 And although I'm not so tall
 There's no corresponding shortage of grey
 matter 'neath my hat.
 Just an average chap you see
 Whose ambition is to be
 An apiarist and poultryman—raise hens and
 such as that.

All summer long the busy bee
 Will diligently work for me,
 'Mong the sweet alfalfa blossoms 'neath the
 sunny western skies.
 And the cackling biddies white
 Will scratch with all their might,
 And lay eggs to beat the nation when the price
 begins to rise.

It will take some ready cash
 To provide those hens with "hash,"
 To buy a place and build a house—support
 myself and wife.
 So we're hustling every day
 For that's the only way,
 To acquire those "twenty acres" and enjoy the
 country life.

CONGRATULATION.

*"Troubles are like babies—They grow larger by
 nursing."*

Though I'm rather short on one end,
 My legs still reach to the ground,
 I may seem rather small,
 But I say to you all
 That I *feel* just as big as though seven feet tall,
 And weighed over three hundred pounds.
 Not by stature or avoirdupois
 Should the measure of character be,
 I have no tale of woe,
 For wherever I go,
 I try to be cheerful and happy, and so
 I'm a pretty good fellow, you see.
 I am glad I've ambition and hope.
 And am not addicted to drink.
 Though I haven't much "dough,"
 I am thankful to know
 That I still have my health and am able to go,
 For these are great blessings, I think.
 Now, these awkward jingles of mine
 Are only a "bluff," so to speak;
 Perhaps more rhyme than reason,
 And more truth than treason;
 In any event, I opine they're in season.
 The moral is not far to seek.

OBSERVATION.

I often ponder as I go along my legless way,
 Upon the things that people do and things that
 people say,
 And often I am much amused, but sometimes feel
 inclined

To swear a bit, and call them down; but then I
 call to mind
 That such proceedings do no good, and so I pass
 it by;
 I force a smile or crack a joke, and wink the other
 eye.

So many funny things occur within a working day
 And such a lot of meanness does the human race
 display,

Along with much that's good and kind, and gen-
 erous and wise,
 And foolish and detestable, and small, that I
 surmise,

A poor attempt to picture in a jingle of this style,
 Some traits of human nature might cause some
 to wear a smile.

The people do not credit me with penetration
 great,

A legless man, a brainless man—such seems their
 estimate.

I'm often scoffed and scowled upon, and often
 made to feel

That I'm a nuisance and a bore, and that my mild
 appeal

For patronage is out of place, and that I should
 be made

To try some other line of work, or learn some
 other trade;

If a cripple makes a living shoveling coal or saw-
 ing wood;

If he hustles like a harvest hand, and if perhaps
 he should

Be able by heroic work, the odds to overcome,
 Of a natural disadvantage, then he may receive a
 sum,

Of praise and approbation, and be credited with
 vim,

And his efforts be applauded, for such is the
 people's whim.

But let him try to hustle in some less heroic way
 Than wheeling bricks or keeping books at fifty
 cents per day,

Let him go selling something on the street from
 door to door

Or try to make a bigger bluff and open up a store;
 Then the people call it "charity," and every cent
 they spend

With him will be to "help him out," and failure
 is the end.

I am ridiculed, defended; complimented, criticised.
 I am praised and blamed and censured; I'm
 refused and patronized.

I am told my work is worthy; I'm assured my
 work is trash,

And amidst conflicting notions, I am prone to be
 so rash

As to deem my own opinion quite sufficient, for I find
That a liberal egotism vastly helps my peace of mind.
A number "do not need" my book; this pretext is absurd.
No one's supposed to "need" it, although it's to be inferred
That those who think exclusively of their own wants and needs,
Will likely not surprise the world with kind and generous deeds,
But people must have some excuse when disinclined to buy,
Or when they wish to hide the fact, of being somewhat "shy."
Sometimes they ask me where I'm from in quite suggestive tone
And then demand severely why I do not stay at home.
I'm not permitted, so it seems, to wander where I will,
Not even though I make my way, and promptly pay my bill.
If a reservation Indian, this sentiment might apply,
As a citizen of the U. S. A., I see no reason why.
With some, they have "so many calls," it really makes them sore;
They'll swear that six were here today and seven day before.
It's quite impossible, they say, to give to everyone;
But, generally, if the truth were known, they've given up to none.
But sing them all the same old song, and promptly turn them down,
Though, if you let them tell it, they're the most liberal men in town.
The hypocrites are legion. There's the one who cannot see,
Because he left his specs at home—perhaps he can't see me,
Without his specs, or find his purse, or understand me when
I tell him what the book contains. Then there are other men
Whose sympathy for me is great, and had they "time to read,"
They'd buy the book with pleasure—yes, they really would, indeed.
The genius known as "rubber neck" is always to be found,
With staring eyes and open mouth, he follows me around
To get a chance to question me, and gratify his whims

And morbid curiosity—"How did you lose your limbs?"
This query always takes the lead, and if I did allow,
He would quiz me for an hour, asking when and where and how:
The grouchy individual who will not condescend
To even look at what I have, and hardly will unbend,
Sufficiently to say good day, but greets me with a frown
'Tis scarcely worth my while to add he always turns me down.
The busy man is even worse—he cannot spare the time
Required to find his pocket book and fish me out a dime.
Some folks, alas! have "time to burn," and nothing loth to look,
Will seat themselves in easy chairs and finger o'er my book.
The pictures interest them much, and portions they must read,
Consuming time I ill can spare. My hints they will not heed,
But sit and idly leaf it o'er, and finally, with a sigh,
They calmly hand it back and say they do not wish to buy.
The "hard luck" fellow makes me sick, his tale of woe is long,
He has a wife and sixteen kids—he's up against it strong;
He's "sick himself," and worse than broke, his business on the bum;
And with this string of misery goes a smell of low grade rum,
And like him, is the would-be sport, who grins a sickly grin,
When I spring my book upon him, and declares that he's "all in."
Some folks seem worried by the fear that I'm possessed of wealth,
That I am not obliged to work, but hustle for my health.
I'm oft accused of being rich, and making too much "dough,"
How much I am allowed to make, is what I want to know.
Is fifteen plunks a week too much—is ten a week enough?
Unless they place some limit, I shall disregard their guff.
It's odd how folks imagine legless men all look alike.
While hustling hard to sell my book, so many times I strike

Ten Years of Hustling Without Feet

Some fellow who has "got one"—names some
other time and place,
Or at least a man "just like me," he remembers
well the face,
I resemble all the legless men on earth, they seem
to say,
For I'm taken for some other chap a dozen times
a day.

But, really, these unpleasant types are hardly
worth my while,
To indicate or point them out except to cause a
smile,
Although I find them everywhere, in every town
and state,
And they're numbered by the thousand, yet I
can extenuate
Their faults when I recall the fact that most folks
are inclined
To be courteous and agreeable, and generous and
kind.

And so I hope my little song will give offense to
none,
But those who find the shoe to fit, are free to put
it on,
And if my verses do no good, I trust they'll do no
harm.
The most that I expect from them is that they
may disarm
Some criticism, and perhaps make thoughtless
people think,
And with this explanation, I'll refrain from
wasting ink.

COMPENSATION.

'Tis by misfortune mortal man must learn
Appreciation of life's blessings; and
By loss of some, the value greater seems
Of those which yet remain.

Had I not lost my feet
I ne'er had realized the boon it were
To have a pair of hands
Uninjured. Or eyes, or speech and hearing,
Or health. I should have e'en accepted these
Unthinkingly as but my due, without a thought
Of their great value.

I should ne'er have known
How mean and selfish some men are, nor yet
How good and kind were others. Two extremes
Of human nature thus I daily see
Exemplified, and thus I learn
To value more the good
In contrast with the evil.

I likewise learn humility, and how the shallow
snob,
Puffed up with vanity and pride,
Is but a fool—no more, no less—because
He has not learned this lesson.

Patience and perseverance, too, I find,
Are virtues much required by footless men,
And in their exercise
I gain in both and thus do benefit
By trials and misfortunes.

PROTESTATION

Where'er I go, where'er I stray,
I'm asked by every blooming jay
This question—which they know must be
Most disagreeable to me:

"How did you lose your limbs?"

No matter how I'm occupied,
They always must be satisfied,
As much as forty times a day,
Some curious cuss stops me to say:

"How did you lose your limbs?"

As if to cap the climax, then,
They'll tell great tales of other men,
Who likewise were all cut to pieces
In various ways and times and places.

If, out of patience, I depart,
And thus give them the marble heart,
They'll say, with many a scowl and scoff,
"He orter had his head cut off."

Why, some folks act as if they thought
I relished all this tommy-rot;
Although if they were in my place
They'd clearly see 'twas not the case.

Egad! To humor suchlike whims,
Is worse than losing *all* one's limbs;
To keep from telling folks this tale
Methinks I'd better wear a veil.

I've tried all ways without success
To lessen this unpleasantness,
But 'tis no use—the task's too great,
Ten million chumps to educate.

And now a desperate move I'll make,
Prepared the consequence to take;
I'm drove to it, so break away,
For this is all I have to say:

"Ye curious ones, the stuff is off,"
Henceforth it is *my* time to scoff;
The answer plain to all must be—
"It's none of your ——— business." See?

PROVOCATION.

The bitterness of being stared at and openly pitied.

Where'er I travel, everywhere I go,
I meet the stony stare and curious gaze
Of multitudes of people who should know
'Twas rude and impolite to have such ways.

Such penalty I thus am forced to pay
For circumstances out of my control;
It seems as though the gaping goslings say,
Behold the footless man without a soul (sole).

'Tis pity and compassion, some insist
Inspires this rude and curious display
Of ghoulish, gaping gawkiness and twist
Of "rubbernecks," 'as I go on my way.

Too sensitive? Indeed, perhaps I am,
Some fools I've known are flattered by such
scenes;

It's possible, of course, that I'm a clam,
And do not know what fellow-feeling means.

Hey Rube! with sense of fitness sadly mixed,
Why stand and stare, spellbound, with mouth
agap?

Forsooth! I'd rather much be in my fix
Than to be you, an uncouth country yap.

I should be soothed and comforted, I guess,
And flattered, too, and grateful, but beware,
My thoughtless friends, for freely, I confess,
Your actions rather make me want to swear.

I dread the hour of four when schools release
Their howling "mob" of kids, who wildly run,
And follow, jeering, giving me no peace
As if I were invented for their fun.

Thou devilish kid! Thou infant terrible! I would
That thou were plumb in Halifax betimes,
And that thy parents and thy teachers should
Be held responsible for all thy shames.

Say, giggling school girl, art thou crazy quite?
Been taking laughing gas, or what's the rip?
Dost always have convulsions at the sight
Of just an ordinary, legless crip?

And thou, with mournful mein and gloomy talk,
Who feel or think you feel compassion great
And pity me—I wish you'd take a walk
Around the block and not arouse my hate.

For, mark you, thoughtless woman, man or boy,
Who thus your tender "sympathy" express
And seem to know not that you thus destroy
A large percentage of my hapiness.

*I revel not in mournful, morbid moods,
I hate this silly, sorrowful display
Of pity, and the gloomy platitudes
Of those who think I ought to feel that way.*

Upon the streets, in depots or hotels,
The vulgar public stare outrageously,
'Tis only natural when a man rebels,
And roasts them roundly, as they ought to be.

Oh, motley crowd of rubbernecks, stare on,
For verily your actions have a charm,
It makes me think of boyhood days upon
A little ranch—a Western cattle farm.

A stray dog through the range would chance to
pass;

The cattle spy him and with wonder stare,
And, curiously affected, leave their grass
And circle round or stand and sniff the air.

Thus human cattle oft exemplify
The traits of four-legg'd creatures whom they
ape;

And like the canine in the case, do I,
Disgusted, growling, quick make my escape.

'Tis natural curiosity, of course,
The same that makes the miller seek the flame;
'Tis aggravating, and what makes it worse,
The people call it by another name.

Disguised as "sympathy," this curious streak,
In human nature finds apology,
For actions most absurd, of which I speak,
In candor, frankness and sincerity.

And yet, why harp upon a thankless theme?
The ignorant and thoughtless take no heed.
And to the wise and thoughtful it may seem
That I'm a peevish pessimist, indeed.

So not in mournful tone and hopeless mood
Or sullen silence shall end my rhymes,
But rather shall I seek the "soul of good,"
Said to be found in evil things at times.

DONATION

"Ah! There comes a beggar," I hear someone say.
"I'll ignore the poor devil—he'll soon go away.
What a shame those fellows don't keep out of
sight;

They ought to know better—I don't think it's
right.

He was selling a pamphlet? Is that what you
say?

Well, if he waits till I buy one, 'twill be a cold day.
I don't feel like donating *all* I've got—
Here, let's have a soda! Dear me, ain't it hot?"

"Good heaven, just look what a pitiful sight,
That poor fellow there's in a miserable plight.
I always do pity a poor cripple so,
If I had a million, to such it would go.

Dear me, I believe he is coming this way.
What? Sell me some article? No, not today.
All my spare change I gave for the spread of
God's word,

Good day, my poor fellow, just trust in the Lord."

"Hello! Here's a fellow that's played in hard
luck;

He seems to be selling some sort of a book.
Where's that quarter I had in my pocket just
now?

Whatever he's selling, I'll buy anyhow.
Hold on there, my friend. Let me have one of
those.

(I hope he succeeds wherever he goes.)
What! It's only ten cents. Keep the change,
that's all right,
I'd just blow it in, anyhow, before night."

* * * * *

Behold here three samples of people I meet;
'Tis by no means overdrawn, but direct from the street.

The first two are often and frequently met,
While the third one, I fear, I am looking for yet.
Each shows an extreme, and, of course, "there are others."

You, yourself, may be one of the third man's brothers.

But selfishness here and hypocrisy there,
Only add to the burdens which we have to bear.

APPRECIATION.

I have at times, in former rhymes,
And somewhat caustic vein or mood,
Portrayed some types of people met
But fear I've overlooked the good.
The many kind and generous souls,
Like light within a darkened room,
Impart new life and energy;
Their radiance soon dispels the gloom.
How oft I meet, upon the street,
In store or office or hotel,
The genial, kindly, courteous man,
Who takes much pains to treat me well.
With friendly greeting and a smile,
And kindly sympathy I meet,
A man like this sometimes who makes
Me quite forget I have no feet.

Encouragement and words of cheer
And friendly fellow-feeling, too,
How like a tonic 'tis to meet
Such people when I'm feeling blue.
They seem to lessen all the strife,
To be a brilliant, golden ray—
"The rainbow to the storms of life,
The beam that smiles the clouds away."

I vainly strive with ill success
And more or less of platitude
To, in my awkward verse, express
Some measure of my gratitude.
To show that I appreciate,
Their kindliness and courtesy,
This humble rhyme I dedicate
To them in all sincerity.

Oh! noble, liberal-minded men,
And women, too, where'er you be,
Accept this tribute of regard
For having thus befriended me.

THE WEST

I love the rugged West;
Her people are the best.
For whole-souled generosity the West is hard to beat.
I've traveled back and forth,
Both East and South and North,

But in the West I thrive the best, and more good people meet.

'Tis true they're wild and rough
And sometimes coarse and gruff,
And not so "nasty nice" as some you'll find down East, but then

Within each rugged breast
Glow the spirit of the West—
The feeling of fraternity toward their fellow men.

Here's to you, Western folk!
Though many times you're "broke,"
And it's either feast or famine with you—either make or break,
Your adversity you bear,
Your prosperity you share,
With a lavish liberality to all who will partake.

"I would rather be dead,"
Some folks say to me.
"Than in your fix to be,
I'd as soon lose my head."
Now, I've never been dead,
So I cannot tell how
I would like it, and now
As to losing my head
That has happened before
Quite a number of times,
So I'll finish my rhymes,
Lest you think me a bore.

HOW IT HAPPENED

What boots it how my limbs were lost?
By railroad train or winter's frost,
By fire or flood, or kick of mule,
Or cyclone, or a sharpened tool;
By cannon ball, or by a fall,
Like Humpty-Dumpty, from the wall?
What odds if they were cut or bit,
Or crushed or broken, sawed or hit,
With ax or club or trolley car,
Or lightning, or the mighty jar
Of dynamite, or in a fight
With bears, or by a reptile's bite?
Why speculate and crave to know
The cause whereby I am forced to go
Without my feet; why hanker for
The gloomy, harrowing details or
The how and whence, wherefore and why?
The story can but cause a sigh
Of vain regret, so why not let
It pass, and thus I may forget

CIRCUMSTANCE.

A high gray wall, behind whose fast-barred gate,
One listens, powerless, to the poignant strife
Of freer souls without, who war with fate
And wrest the pledge denied him—joy of life.
—Anonymous.